

Name: _____

IF YOU KNOW AN ABUSER

Abusers often use excuses to justify their violent behavior. You need to remember that it's all about **POWER** and **CONTROL**—not about anger, stress, drugs, alcohol or some complaint about what their partner does or doesn't do. Hurting, threatening or belittling someone is an effective way to maintain control over that person.

If someone you know is abusive:

- Talk to the abuser about his behavior. Tell him, "I'm not going to sit here as your friend and watch this happen and not say anything about it."
- Be specific about what you witnessed and how it made you feel: "I didn't like it when you told your girlfriend that she was fat in front of all of us. It must have made her feel really bad."
- Tell the abuser that what he is doing is wrong.
- Let him know that physically abusing someone is a crime and will have legal consequences. Remind him that he could be arrested for violent behavior and have to go through life with a criminal record.
- Let him know that abuse is always a choice. It is a learned behavior that can be unlearned with help—as long as he has a commitment to change.
- Let him know that he is responsible for his actions, that he cannot blame his violent behavior on anger, stress, drugs, alcohol or what his partner does or doesn't do.
- Educate yourself about relationship abuse.
- Urge him to seek help. He can talk to a counselor, coach, member of the clergy or any other trusted adult. He can call a hotline, such as the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1 (800) 799-SAFE.